



# NEWS RELEASE

## VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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Number 7

Released: July 11, 2003

### WHEAT AND BARLEY YIELDS STEADILY DECLINE

According to the Virginia Agricultural Statistics Service, Virginia's wheat crop is expected to total 8.745 million bushels with an average yield of 53 bushels per harvested acre. If realized, this total will be 1.965 million bushels below last year's harvest. The 18 percent decrease can be directly correlated with the drop in acreage and weather conditions during the growing season. Barley has also shown a decline compared to last year's production. Barley yields have been declining steadily the last three years. Producers are expecting a yield of 67 bushels per harvested acre, down 13 percent from last year.

### FLUE CURED TOBACCO DOWN 18 PERCENT FROM 2002 VIRGINIA PEACH PRODUCTION INCREASING 1 MILLION POUNDS COMPARED TO 2002

Virginia's 2003 flue cured tobacco production is expected to total 42 million pounds, down from 51.48 million pounds from last year. This decline in production results from a quota reduction and lower yields. The decrease in yield is attributed to prolonged periods of rainfall causing poor growing conditions. Acres harvested are estimated at 20,000 acres, with a yield of 2,100 pounds per acre. This yield forecast is down 240 pounds from last year.

Virginia's 2003 peach crop is expected to total 8.0 million pounds. This production forecast is based in the crop conditions as of July 1. If realized, this year's estimated production would be up 1 million pounds from last year. Rainfall coupled with cool weather conditions have been ideal for the peach crop.

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Cooperating with Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

## **WINTER WHEAT PRODUCTION UP 6 PERCENT FROM JUNE FORECAST**

U.S. winter wheat production is forecast at 1.72 billion bushels. This is up 6 percent from last month and 50 percent above 2002. The U.S. yield is forecast at 47.0 bushels per acre, up 2.4 bushels from last month.

U.S. hard Red Winter, at 1.09 billion bushels, is up 9 percent from a month ago. White Winter is up 2 percent from last month and now totals 259 million bushels. Soft Red Winter, at 366 million bushels, is down 1 percent from the last forecast.

U.S. durum wheat production is forecast at 93.5 million bushels, up 18 percent from 2002. The U.S. yield is forecast at 34.1 bushels per acre, 4.7 bushels more than last year.

## **BARLEY PRODUCTION UP 28 PERCENT**

U.S. barley production for 2003 is forecast at 292 million bushels, 28 percent above 2002. Based on conditions as of July 1, the average yield is forecast at 59.5 bushels per acre, up 4.6 bushels from last year. Area harvested, at 4.90 million acres, is up 18 percent from 2002.

## **U.S. FLUE-CURED TOBACCO PRODUCTION UP SLIGHTLY FROM 2002 U.S. PEACH PRODUCTION UP 2 PERCENT FROM 2002**

U.S. all flue-cured production is forecast at 518.7 million pounds, up less than 1 percent from the 2002 crop but 10 percent below 2001. Yield per acre for flue-cured tobacco is forecast at 2,170 pounds, up 65 pounds from 2002 but 262 pounds below the 2001 yield. Forecasted yields for all flue-cured tobacco in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia increased from last year, while yields are expected to decline in Virginia and Florida.

The July 2003 forecast of U.S. peach production is 2.62 billion pounds, up 2 percent from 2002 and 8 percent above two years ago. Nineteen States forecast increases in production from last year, while 7 States expect declines and 3 States remain unchanged.

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